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**EUREGA Interreg Europe in Kuopio 18 – 20 June 2019**

**3rd Interregional Knowledge Exchange Visit**

ProAgria Pohjois-Savo had the pleasure to host the 3rd EUREGA Interreg Europe Interregional Knowledge Exchange visit in Kuopio, Finland on 18 – 20 June 2019.

The theme of the visit was gastronomy and health and thus, the 25 EUREGA Interreg Europe Project Partners and stakeholders from eight European countries had a full three-day program introducing Kuopio region’s knowhow on the topic.

The Project Partners learnt extensively especially on the topics of the Nordic Diet with its wholegrain products, wild berries and freshwater fish and about the Finnish free school lunch. Both have been identified as Kuopio region’s strengths and thus, part of Kuopio region’s best practices that can be shared with the rest of the EUREGA Interreg Europe Project Partners.

The working sessions concentrated on sharing knowledge on the best practices from all the Project Partners and on different case studies presented in Kuopio. The case studies included, for example, research done in Kuopio region on the topic of wellbeing as a new food trend (Future Food Unit of Savonia University of Applied Sciences), research and cultivation of the Arctic Bramble (University of Eastern Finland), on Nordic Diet and the Nordic Diet compared to the way the Finns eat in reality (University of Eastern Finland).

The Project Partners left Finland with a proper understanding on the benefits of a Nordic Diet as well as with examples and further information on the topic of free school lunch.

The host and one of the EUREGA Interreg Europe Project Partners, ProAgria Pohjois-Savo gained a lot of insight on the best practices of the other Project Partners. Furthermore, Ilona Sares, the International Executive Director at ProAgria Pohjois-Savo stated that

*“Not only is the EUREGA Interreg Europe project a useful tool to share knowledge and information on gastronomy and to learn from the other Project Partners, it also has already proved its power in influencing regional strategies and policies. It is thanks to EUREGA that The Pilot Action: Regions in Industrial Transition project has recognised sustainable tourism as one of the smart specialisation priorities, i.e. its niche areas of competitive strengths in East North Finland. It is a significant matter for the regional strategy, as the other smart specialisation priorities have more to do with traditional industries.”*

**Further Information on EUREGA Interreg Europe project in Kuopio, Finland:**

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